

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Ag 84 Pro

United States Department of Agriculture

Soil Conservation Service

Program Aid Number 1436

'Ruby' redosier dogwood

U.S. SENATE LIBRARY

DEC 18 '89

USDA
NATL AGRIC. LIBRARY
RECEIVED



‘Ruby’ redosier dogwood

‘Ruby’ redosier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera* Michx.) is a low-growing shrub with bright red bark. Ruby is especially useful for streambank protection because of the tendency of the side branches to root or “layer.” This layering ability provides excellent soil erosion control and streambank stabilization.

In addition, Ruby can be used for borders and as a single plant for beautification and landscaping. Twigs are a desirable deer browse. The fruit of this shrub is good for many species of songbirds and a number of upland game birds.

The cultivar Ruby redosier dogwood was released in 1988 by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Description

Ruby is a shrub that can grow 6 to 10 feet in height with outside stems ascending. Where stems contact the ground, roots develop at the nodes. Ruby has bright red stems, white pith, dark green leaves, and fruit that is white to cream in color. Ruby is a thicket-forming shrub because of its stems that grow along or under the ground and take root at the nodes to form new plants.

Adaptation

Ruby redosier dogwood was collected from a single native plant in Painted Post, New York, in 1975. The climatic zone of adaptation is shown on the map. Ruby can be adapted wherever redosier dogwood grows naturally in the United States and Canada. It grows in medium fertility and in slightly acid, clayey, loamy, or sandy soils. It is moderately tolerant of shade but poorly tolerant of drought.

Establishment

Before planting Ruby, streambanks with steep slopes must be graded to a 1 to 1 or 2 to 1 slope. It should be planted in the early spring using 1-year-old rooted cuttings or fresh hardwood cuttings that are one-fourth to one-half inch in diameter and 9 to 12 inches in length. One or two inches of cutting wood should protrude. Do not plant after June 1.

Both rooted and unrooted cuttings should be planted in a vertical position and the soil tamped firmly around the roots or cuttings to eliminate air pockets. At the edge

of water, a single or double row of Ruby is recommended at spacings of 2 feet. 'Streamco' purpleosier willow or 'Bankers' dwarf willow should be planted on the remainder of the bank.

Ruby is susceptible to browsing by livestock and cannot be established unless protected by a fence.

Grass, such as tall fescue and red fescue mix, and legumes, such as birdsfoot trefoil, should be seeded immediately after planting Ruby to provide initial streambank protection. Ruby becomes effective 2 to 3 years after planting.

For help in planning streambank plantings, contact SCS or your local conservation district office.



Management

Protecting the waterline as damage takes place is necessary to prevent accelerated erosion. Streambanks should be examined each spring, and sparse plant cover should be filled in with the new plants at once.

Any mechanical measures used to control the bank, such as riprap, must be kept in repair to maintain effective vegetative cover.



Propagation

Ruby is propagated by vegetative methods. Hardwood cuttings, approximately 9 inches long, are made in mid-February. They are held in plant coolers until they are planted into nursery beds in mid-May. Rooting hormones significantly improve rooting ability. The plant is ready for shipping the following spring.

Availability

Nursery owners may obtain propagated material from the Big Flats Plant Materials Center, Corning, New York, to start their cutting block for commercial production.

For the names of commercial nurseries that sell Ruby or for more information on its use, contact your local SCS office. SCS is listed in the telephone directory under United States Government, Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. All programs and services of the Soil Conservation Service are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

-  **Area of adaptation of
'Ruby' redosier dogwood**
-  **Probable area of adaptation**

